

## The Fence

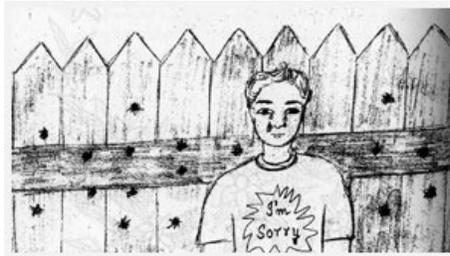


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*Here is a story that teaches a powerful lesson for all. Our anger and hurtful words can cause more harm to those around us than we ever imagined.*

Once there was a little boy who had a very bad temper. When he got angry, he usually said, and often did, some very hurtful things. His father gave him a bag of nails and told him that every time he lost his temper, he must hammer a nail into the back of the fence.

The first day, the boy had driven 37 nails into the fence (That was one angry young man!). Over the next few weeks, as he learned to control his anger, the number of nails hammered daily gradually dwindled down. He discovered it was easier to hold his temper than to drive those nails into the fence. Finally the day came when the boy didn't lose his temper at all. He told his father about it and the father suggested that the boy now pull out one nail for each day that he was able to hold his temper. The days passed and the young boy was finally able to tell his father that all the nails were gone.



The father took his son by the hand and led him to the fence. He said, "You have done well, my son, but look at the holes in the fence. The fence will never be the same. When you say things in anger, they leave a scar just like this one. Saying or doing hurtful things in anger produces the same kind of result. There will always be a scar, and a verbal wound is as bad as a physical one. People are much more valuable than an old fence. We need to treat everyone with respect and kindness to prevent as many scars as we can."

A most valuable lesson and a reminder most of us need from time to time. We all occasionally get angry. The real test is **HOW** we handle it and what we **DO** with it. If we are wise, we will spend our time building bridges rather than barriers in our relationships.